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Canada welcomes adoption of G7 principles on information society

BRUSSELS, February 27, 1995 The Canadian delegation to the G7 Information Society Ministerial Conference, composed of Industry Minister John Manley, Canadian Heritage Minister Michel Dupuy and Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development) Jon Gerrard, today welcomed the successful outcome of the first-ever G7 talks on the future of the global information society. Ministers agreed that the adopted G7 principles will mean that the Information Highway should lead to a better understanding between the peoples of the world, and also create new jobs.

"First, we want the development of the highway to create jobs through innovation and investment. The best way to achieve this is by applying pro-competition policies whenever possible along the information highway," said Minister Manley. "If we truly believe in a global information society, then we must work to ensure that it is just that. Global. Developing countries must participate in this information society," Mr. Manley added.

Minister Dupuy praised the G7's adoption of a principle to make room for diversity of content on information highways. "A this conference, Canada has made significant gains on the cultural front," Mr. Dupuy said. "We have been clear in our position -- we believe that linguistic and cultural diversity of content is in everyone's interest. Governments must retain the flexibility to promote diversity. This flexibility means opening our doors to content from around the world while ensuring that local creators have access to their own markets and the global markets."

Hosted by the European Commission, this Ministerial Conference was the first time that G7 representatives (the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, Japan and Canada) have addressed the economic, social and technical issues from the growth of new technologies. The Canadian delegation was joined by leaders from Canada's communications industry (Lynton Wilson, André Chagnon, Izzy Asper, Charles Sirois). Canada was also an active participant, with 21 projects, in the European Commission's demonstration showcase, displaying Canada's state-of-the art communications technology.

G7 Ministers endorsed the initiation of eleven pilot projects to accelerate the implementation of the global information society. Canada is leading the project to interconnect the experimental high-speed network of G-7 nations and the project of global emergency management. Canada is also playing a major role in the projects being undertaken in the areas of electronic libraries and electronic museums and galleries network.

G7 Ministers agreed that as many of the joint pilot projects as possible should be initiated in time for the Halifax Summit, so that G-7 leaders can see progress is being made.

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